
ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

NEWS RELEASE



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SOUTHEAST ALASKA COMMERCIAL POT SHRIMP FISHERY ANNOUNCEMENT

Sitka . . . The Alaska Department of Fish and Game today announced the following information concerning the 2012/2013 Southeast Alaska commercial pot shrimp fishery:

2012/2013 Fishing Season and Fishing Periods

All fishing districts and areas will open at 8:00 a.m., Monday, October 1, 2012, and will close at 4:00 p.m., Thursday, February 28, 2013, unless closed earlier by emergency order [5AAC 31.110]. Areas will close when guideline harvest levels (GHLs) have been reached or are expected to be reached by the time of the closure. Shrimp fishing districts or areas where the GHLs have not been reached by February 28, 2013, may be reopened on May 15, 2013, for a summer season. The summer pot shrimp fishing season will close by regulation on July 31, 2013.

The department will issue weekly news releases, usually on Thursday afternoons, which will update fishermen on the progress of the fishery.

Pot shrimp fishermen should be aware that fishing time in certain districts, or areas, may be very limited and may close on short notice, depending on harvest rates and effort levels. Fishermen should also be aware that entire areas with distinct GHLs or portions of these areas may close if the department has specific conservation concerns. If harvest rates are low or sharply declining as the season progresses, these areas may be closed before the GHL has been reached in order to prevent excessive harvests in these areas.

Operation of shrimp fishing gear may only occur during daily fishing periods from 8:00 a.m. through 4:00 p.m. [5AAC 31.124. (e)(5)]. This means that pots may only be hauled or deployed during this eight-hour period each day.

The following provides an overview of regulations and general information affecting the management of the 2012/2013 commercial pot shrimp fishery.

Vessel Registration and Pot Shrimp Identification Tags

All vessels pot shrimp fishing must be registered with the department prior to fishing. Registration is available at any of the Southeast Alaska area offices Monday through Friday during normal working hours. During the 2012/2013 season pot tags will not be required. Catcher-processors willing to

participate in the voluntary logbook program should plan to provide the department with their specific shrimp size category information at the time of registration.

Guideline Harvest Levels (GHL) for the 2012/2013 Season

The GHLs or preseason target harvest amounts in pounds whole weight for each fishing district or area are as follows:

District	2011/2012 Closure Date	Days Open in 2011/2012	10-year Average Harvest	2011/2012 Harvest	2012/2013GHL
District 1	Oct. 26	26	107,095	54,796	50,000
District 2	Oct. 20	20	84,624	75,425	65,000
Section 3-A	Oct. 19	19	183,819	97,632	95,000
Sections 3-B/C	Oct. 22	22	46,560	41,091	30,000
District 4	Feb. 28	151	15,550	17,060	20,000
District 5	July 31	229	13,256	8,568	20,000
District 6	Oct. 10	10	56,207	31,756	24,000 ^a
District 7	Oct. 12	12	75,991	60,075	54,600 ^a
District 8	Oct. 22	22	17,480	12,484	15,000
District 9	Oct. 10	10	18,303	10,799	14,000
District 10	Oct. 7	7	53,609	52,654	48,000
District 11-Seymour	Oct. 6	6	17,732	20,879	Experimental SI^b
District 11-Remainder	Oct. 6	6	4,704	confidential	7,500
District 12-Tenakee	n/a	0	19,952	Closed	pending ^c
District 12-Remainder	Nov. 11	42	13,994	8,337	Closed
Sections 13-A/B	Dec. 3	64	14,193	14,705	15,000
Section 13-C	Oct. 4	4	35,235	37,320	26,000
District 14	n/a	0	15,838	Closed	10,000
District 15	Oct. 28/Jun. 10 ^d	179	14,700	14,488	15,000
District 16	n/a	54	16,370	Closed	15,000

Notes on Table: Bold type indicates GHL has changed from the previous season.

^a The GHLs for Districts 6 and 7 may be adjusted inseason based on the results the District 7 preseason survey and different trigger points in commercial CPUE. Adjustments to GHLs will be announced in weekly fishery updates.

^b Seymour Canal will be managed by an **experimental inseason spawner index (SI)** system for the 2012/2013 season. This management approach is based what has been utilized in British Columbia for many seasons and consists of tracking the number of spawning female shrimp per pot and closing the area once a threshold number of spawning females per pot has been reached.

^c The possibility of a fishery in Tenakee Inlet will depend on the results of the ongoing pre-season survey.

^d D-15 East and west side closure dates

The department has recently completed an annual review of available shrimp stock status information for each area with a distinct GHL and will manage the 2012/2013 season for GHLs identified in the table above. The combined regional GHL for the 2012/2013 season is **in the range of 524,000–554,000 pounds** of whole shrimp.

Basis of Pot Shrimp GHLS, expected season lengths, and Management Approach for 2012/2013 Season

District 1: The GHL for the 2012/2013 season **will remain at 50,000 pounds**. West Behm Canal will be closed after three weeks of fishing (October 21, 2012) and the rest of District 1 will close on November 7, 2012. This closure was based initially on the 50,000 pound GHL and was set to protect West Behm Canal stocks.

In the 2006/2007 season, the GHL for spot shrimp was reduced by 40% due to declining harvest rates and increasing season length observed during the 2000/2001 through 2005/2006 seasons. The GHL was again reduced in the 2008/2009 season with a third reduction coupled with pre-set closures for the 2009/2010 season. One year of overharvest, a collapse of the frozen head-on shrimp market, and the limited ability for on-grounds sampling, has made population changes difficult to assess. Biological factors and harvest data remained stable in the southern part of District 1 during the 2011/2012 season, but the department remains concerned about most other areas of District 1. The recent 10-year average harvest is 107,095 pounds. Harvest for the 2011/2012 season was 55,938 pounds, and triggered an early closure of District 1.

The department received a legislative increment in funding for shrimp research in the region in 2011 and has implemented a new pot gear survey for this district. The survey included areas of Back Behm, West Behm, Carroll Inlet, and George Inlet and will continue this year.

District 2: The GHL for the 2012/2013 season **will remain at 65,000 pounds**. The GHL was reduced in the 2009/2010 season by 25% from 86,000 pounds to 65,000 pounds. This reduction was due to excessive exploitation rates, declining CPUE, and a decrease in mean carapace length. Preliminary indications are that this reduction in GHL is close to a sustainable harvest for this area. In the past, commercial logbook data has indicated a high exploitation rate; however, there was no commercial logbook data available for the 2011/12 season in the district. Commercial CPUE increased in both Cholmondeley Sound and Kasaan Bay during the 2011/12 season. Fishery performance data will again be closely monitored during this upcoming season. Harvest for the 2011/2012 season was 75,425 pounds.

The department initiated a new pot gear survey in 2011 in areas of Cholmondeley Sound and Kasaan Bay which will help to monitor shrimp populations. The recent 10-year average harvest is 84,624 pounds. Harvest for the 2011/2012 season was 75,425 pounds. District 2 is expected to close on October 20, 2012.

Section 3-A: The GHL for the 2012/2013 season **will remain at 95,000 pounds**. The department plans to watch biological and harvest trends in this section closely for the upcoming season. The GHL prior to the 1999/2000 season was approximately 200,000 pounds. In 2000/2001, it was increased to 264,000 pounds. For the 2004/2005 season, consistent decreases in average shrimp size and fishery harvest rates led the department to reduce the GHL to 198,000 pounds. A further decrease in the GHL, to 158,400 pounds, was made for the 2008/2009 season and last season a reduction of 40% lowered the GHL to 95,000 pounds for the 2010/2011 season.

During the four seasons with a 198,000 pound GHL, it appeared that the shrimp population in Section 3-A stabilized at a level much reduced over past years. During the following two seasons the harvest averaged 125,000 pounds or 21% less than the 158,000 pound GHL. This reduced harvest did not produce a positive change in biological or harvest trends prompting the reduction for the 2010/2011 season. The department is looking for stability in biological and harvest trends in this section and will keep the current GHL in place for the 2012/2013 season. The recent 10-year average harvest is 183,819 pounds. Harvest for the 2011/2012 season was 97,632 pounds. Section 3-A is expected to close on October 20, 2012.

Sections 3-B/C: The GHL for the 2012/2013 season **will remain at 30,000**. In the 2007/2008 season, the GHL for spot shrimp was reduced by 20% (from 50,000 to 40,000 pounds) due to a decline in mean carapace length and CPUE. Last season a further reduction of 25% to 30,000 pounds was implemented primarily based on decreasing CPUE. The department intends to watch Sections 3-B/C closely this season

to assess the continued effects of these changes. The recent 10-year average harvest is 46,560 pounds. Harvest for the 2011/2012 season was 41,103 pounds. Section 3-B/C is expected to close on October 20, 2012.

District 4: The GHL for the 2012/2013 season **will remain at 20,000 pounds**. No survey or sampling data has been collected. Harvest and effort has been sporadic throughout the history of the fishery and fishery performance is the only data from District 4 that can be used as an indicator of stock health. The recent 10-year average harvest is 17,060 pounds. Harvest for the 2011/2012 season was *confidential*. District 4 is expected to close on February 28, 2013 and may reopen for the summer season.

District 5: The GHL for 2012/2013 season **will remain at 20,000 pounds**. The GHL of 20,000 pounds has been in place since 1995. District 5 typically receives little effort and has not been closed before February 28 since the 1996/1997 season. During the 2011/2012 season, the district was reopened for the spring/summer season and no harvest occurred. The recent 10-year average harvest is 13,256 pounds. Harvest for the 2011/2012 season was 8,568 pounds. District 5 is expected to close on February 28, 2012 and may reopen for the summer season.

District 6: The GHL for the 2012/2013 season **will remain at 24,000 pounds**. The GHL for District 6 was increased to 82,000 lbs. in the 2005/2006 season, but remained constant at 68,000 lbs. for the 10 prior seasons; it was reduced back to 68,000 lbs. for the 2008/2009 season. Prior to the 2011/12 season, fishermen had voiced concerns over the poor stock health of District 6. The department considered a 3-year closure beginning with the 2011/2012 season largely due to continued poor fishery performance, decreasing shrimp size, and excessive harvest rates. In response, the GHL was significantly reduced to 24,000 lbs beginning with the 2011/12 season. The reduced GHL resulted in an approximate 40% reduction from the prior 4-years average harvest. Harvest rates in portions of District 6 during the 2011/12 season were the highest recorded in recent history, over 1.5 times average. With the negative trends in stock health that have been observed in prior seasons, it is unclear if this past season was an anomaly or if the shrimp abundance is in an upward trend. Due to the uncertainty of stock status and the policy of having GHLs remain in place for 3 consecutive years, the GHL will remain at 24,000 lbs. The department is exploring options using inseason harvest data to provide a framework to raise or lower the GHL inseason. These options may include requiring logbooks to be mandatory. The recent 10-year average harvest is 56,207 pounds. Harvest for the 2011/2012 season was 31,756 pounds and closed on October 10, 2011. The 2012/2013 season is expected to close by October 21.

District 7: The GHL for the 2012/2013 season **will remain at 54,600 pounds**. The GHL in District 7 was reduced to 54,600 pounds beginning with the 2010/2011 season; prior to this, the GHL was 78,000 lbs. from 2004/2005–2009/2010 seasons, 104,000 lbs. from 2000/2001–2003/2004 seasons and 100,000 lbs. from 1995/1996–1999/2000 seasons. Like District 6, District 7 also experienced an apparent large increase of spot shrimp abundance. This was observed in the preseason survey as well as in the catch rates during the fishery. As a result, the management of the fishery was liberal allowing harvest above the GHL. The department is also exploring options to adjust the GHL inseason based on the preseason survey and inseason harvest data. Logbooks and weekly reporting of logbook data may be made mandatory for the 2012/13 season. The recent 10-year average harvest is 75,991 pounds. Harvest for the 2011/2012 season was 60,075 pounds and closed on October 12, 2011. The 2012/2013 season is expected to close by October 28.

District 8: The GHL for the 2012/2013 season **will remain at 15,000 pounds**. The GHL in District 8 has been held steady at 20,000 lbs. from 1997/1998–2009/2010 seasons, prior to that time; a GHR of 75,000–100,000 lbs. was in place for Districts 6 and 8 combined. Commercial catch rates and biological parameters have been below average and have shown decreasing trends in the traditional areas. The recent 10-year average harvest is 17,480 pounds. Harvest for the 2011/2012 season was 12,484 pounds and closed on October 22, 2011. The 2012/2013 season is expected to close by October 31.

District 9: The GHL for the 2012/2013 season **will remain at 14,000 pounds** of spot shrimp and Eliza Harbor north of Deepwater Point will be closed after ten days of fishing (through October 10, 2012). This will be the second year with a pre-set management closure in District 9. This early closure is to prevent excessive harvest of the shrimp population in Eliza Harbor. Fishery performance data is the only data from District 9 that can be used as an indicator of stock health. This data indicates a reduced stock with the average catch per pot decreasing significantly for the third season in a row. In this district, the harvest composition by sub-district is highly variable. Harvest for the 2011/2012 season was 10,799 pounds and the area closed on October 10, 2011. The 2012/2013 season is expected to close by October 20.

District 10: The GHL for the 2012/2013 season **will remain at 48,000 pounds**. The GHL in District 10 increased from 30,000 to 35,000 lbs. in the 2000/2001 season and to 48,000 lbs. in the 2004/2005 season. Harvest has averaged 49,148 lbs. since the 1998/1999 season. Commercial harvest information for District 10 indicates that the shrimp populations are generally stable. The recent 10-year average harvest is 53,609 pounds. Harvest for the 2011/2012 season was 52,654 pounds and closed on October 7, 2011. The 2012/2013 season is expected to close around October 7.

District 11: At the January 2012 Board of Fisheries meeting in Petersburg, District 11 was split into two GHL areas: Seymour Canal with a GHR of 0–30,000 pounds of spot shrimp, and the Remainder of District 11 with a GHR of 0–15,000 pounds of spot and coonstripe shrimp.

District 11-Seymour Canal (11-S): Seymour Canal will be managed by an **experimental inseason spawner index** system for spot shrimp for the 2012/2013 season. This management approach is based on one that has been utilized in British Columbia for many seasons and consists of tracking the number of spawning female shrimp per pot and closing the area once a threshold number of spawning females per pot has been reached. Since this is the first management project of this type used in SE Alaska, the actual target index number of females per pot has not yet been defined. Pot efficiency studies are ongoing during the department's annual shrimp stock assessment surveys, and a target threshold will be determined by the start of the fishery. Inseason sampling will take place daily during the duration of the fishery, and participation in sampling (allowing department staff onboard while fishing is taking place) will be expected for all vessels fishing in Seymour Canal. The recent 10-year average harvest from Seymour Canal is 17,732 pounds. Harvest for the 2011/2012 season was 20,879 pounds and closed on October 6, 2011. Due to the experimental management strategy being employed during the 2012/2013 season, the anticipated duration of the season is unknown.

District 11-Remainder (11-R): The GHL for the 2012/2013 season **will be 7,500 pounds of spot and coonstripe shrimp**. There is little biological or recent harvest data available for the Remainder of District 11. Confidential harvest data suggests declining stock performance in the northern portion of the GHL area, and the very limited harvest data from the southern portion of the area is inconclusive. If warranted, portions of the area may close before the GHL is reached. The recent 10 year average harvest is 4,704 pounds. The harvest for the 2011/2012 season is confidential and the season closed on October 6, 2011. With little recent harvest data available, the anticipated duration of the season is unknown.

District 12 – Tenakee Inlet (12-T): The possibility of a fishery for the 2012/2013 season will be determined by the results of the ongoing preseason survey. Should a fishery be warranted, the GHL **will be 10,000 pounds** of spot shrimp. The Tenakee GHL was established at 20,000 lbs. in the 2001/2002 season. Based on strong biological and fishery parameters, the GHL was raised to 28,000 lbs. in the 2005/2006 season. When a strong decline in fishery performance was observed in the 2008/2009 season, the GHL was reduced to 17,000 lbs., and further reduced to 10,000 lbs. in the 2010/2011 season. The 2010 preseason survey found significant increases in both large and small shrimp in portions of Tenakee Inlet and a two-day fishery was allowed, harvesting 14,152 pounds. The 2011 preseason survey results were the poorest on record and the fishery was not opened for the 2011/2012 season. Should the preseason survey indicate the stock has recovered sufficiently to provide for the 10,000 lb. GHL, it is

likely the duration of the fishery will not exceed two days. A separate News Release about the Tenakee fishery will be issued once the pre-season survey and data analysis have been completed.

District 12 – Remainder (12-R): The remainder of District 12 **will be closed**. Due to continually declining fishery performance, the area will be closed for three seasons for stock rebuilding. The 12-R GHJ was established at 15,000 lbs. in the 2001/2002 season, and was reduced to 10,000 lbs. for the 2008/2009 season due to declining fishery performance. This GHJ has not been achieved in the past three seasons. The 2010/2011 season harvest was 8,339 pounds. Kelp Bay closed on October 18, 2011, with the remainder of the area open until November 11, 2011. The area will reopen in 2015.

Sections 13-A/B: The GHJ for the 2012/2013 season **will remain at 15,000 pounds** of spot shrimp and Crawfish and West Crawfish Inlet east of Aspid Cape, will be closed after ten days of fishing (through October 10, 2012). This will be the second year with a pre-set management closure in Section 13-A/B. This early closure is to prevent excessive harvest of shrimp populations in Crawfish and West Crawfish Inlets. Fishery performance data is the only data from Sections 13-A/B that can be used as an indicator of stock health. This data has shown some decrease recently, however, this decrease could be attributed to significant periods of extremely poor weather. Harvest for the 2011/2012 season was 14,705 pounds and closed on December 3, 2011. The 2012/2013 season is expected to close by December 20.

Section 13-C: The GHJ for the 2012/2013 season **will be reduced by 13% to 26,000 pounds** of spot shrimp. The GHJ for Section 13-C was reduced from 34,000 pounds to 30,000 pounds for the 2008/2009 season due to declining survey trends. In the more productive Hoonah Sound portion of Section 13-C, annual surveys have been conducted since 1998. Recent survey results show some of the biological indicators used to assess population health are declining which suggests a population under stress. The commercial fishery CPUE has been relatively stable for this area for the period 1997–2009; however in 2009 it began to decline. Commercial fishery CPUE data is not considered a good indicator of spot shrimp stock health, except when significant declines are indicated. Given the continuing decline in the biological indicators used to assess stock health, the GHJ will be reduced for the 2012/2013 season. The 2011/2012 harvest was 37,320 lbs. of spot shrimp and closed on October 4, 2011. The 2012/2013 season is expected to close by October 5.

District 14: The GHJ for the 2012/2013 season **will be 10,000 pounds of spot shrimp**. District 14 has been closed for three seasons in an effort to rebuild stocks and will be re-opened.

District 15: The GHJ for the 2012/2013 season **will be 15,000 pounds** of coonstripe shrimp. The 15,000 pound GHJ will be managed by splitting the harvest between the eastern and western portions of the district. This split is defined by a line from the southernmost tip of Seduction Point south to Little Island light. Both areas of the district will be managed for 7,500 pounds of coonstripe shrimp each. Commercial harvest information and biological parameters for District 15 indicate that the shrimp population is sustaining itself with this strategy. Landing and catch sampling information will be collected from this fishery and the department may close either area if needed to distribute effort and harvest. The department intends to manage the District 15 commercial shrimp fishery with a 15,000 pound guideline harvest level while distributing this harvest equally between the eastern and western portions of the district. A total of 14,488 lbs of coonstripe shrimp was harvested during the 2011/2012 season. The eastern portion of the district was closed October 28, 2011 and remainder of the district closed on June 10, 2012 after reopening the western section of the district for a summer fishery. The 2011/2012 season is expected to close by similar dates this season.

District 16: The GHJ for the 2012/2013 season **will be 15,000 pounds** of spot and coonstripe shrimp. In response to poor fishery performance, the 20,000 pound GHJ of coonstripe shrimp was reduced to 15,000 pounds including spot shrimp in the 2004/2005 season, and continued declines led to a three year closure from 2005–2008 to rebuild stocks. A rotational fishery strategy was established for the 2008/2009 season, closing the district for a year after significant harvest occurs, and re-opening the following season with a

GHL of 15,000 lbs. of spot and coonstripe shrimp. In 2010/2011 the fishery was successfully opened for the second time on its two year rotational schedule. The recent 10-year average harvest is 16,370 pounds. Harvest for the 2010/2011 season is confidential and the area closed on November 23, 2010.

In-season Reporting and Fish Ticket Requirements

The “2012–2015 Statewide Commercial Shrimp, Dungeness Crab, and Miscellaneous Shellfish Fishing Regulations” pamphlet is available at ADF&G area offices. Shrimp catcher-processor (including direct-marketers) and catcher-seller fishermen are advised to become familiar with the following regulation:

5 AAC 31.143. Reporting requirements for commercial shrimp vessels in Registration Area A.

- (a) Unless otherwise specified by the department, the owner or operator of a commercial shrimp vessel operating pot gear in Registration Area A shall report by telephone or in person to a local representative of the department within two business days of deploying shrimp gear and two business days after ceasing shrimp fishing in any district or portion of a district with a guideline harvest level established by the department, including the following information:
 - (1) the pounds in whole weight by species of shrimp on board the vessel taken during the fishing period in any district or portion of a district;
 - (2) other information requested by the department for the purpose of conserving or developing shrimp resources.
- (b) In addition to the reporting requirements specified in (a) of this section, the weekly reporting requirements in Registration Area A for vessels commercial shrimp fishing with pots or beam trawls are as follows:
 - (1) unless other arrangements have been made with a local representative of the department, each week the owner or operator of a shrimp pot catcher-processor vessel, or the owner or operator of a shrimp pot catcher-seller vessel, operating gear in the waters of Registration Area A shall contact, by telephone or in person, the ADF&G area office in the area where shrimp fishing occurs, before 12:00 noon Wednesday during normal business hours of 8:00 a.m. through 5:00 p.m.; the following information must be provided at the time of contact:
 - (A) the permit holder’s name;
 - (B) the name and ADF&G license plate number of the shrimp pot vessel;
 - (C) the following information regarding ADF&G fish tickets:
 - (i) ADF&G fish ticket number of each fish ticket used since the last contact;
 - (ii) date of landing on each fish ticket;
 - (iii) district and statistical area on each fish ticket;
 - (iv) the number of pot lifts on each fish ticket;
 - (v) days that pots soaked on each fish ticket;
 - (vi) weight of spot and coonstripe shrimp per fish ticket specifying whether whole or tail weight;
 - (D) date of last delivery.
 - (E) any other information the commissioner determines is necessary for the conservation and management of the fishery.
- (c) The fish ticket requirement for commercial shrimp pot and beam trawl vessels in Registration Area A are as follows:
 - (1) an owner or operator of a shrimp pot catcher-processor vessel shall complete a separate fish ticket for each day fished for each district or portion of a district with a guideline harvest level established by the department, and in which shrimp are harvested and processed on board the vessel; fish tickets must be submitted to the department within seven days of closure of a district or portion of a district with a guideline harvest level; a shrimp pot catcher-processor who has stopped fishing in a district or portion of a district with a guideline harvest level shall contact, by telephone or in person, the local ADF&G area office and report the information specified in this

paragraph before fishing in a new district or portion of a district with a guideline harvest level established by the department;

- (d) The owner or operator of a catcher-seller vessel registered to take shrimp in Registration Area A shall complete an ADF&G shrimp fish ticket indicating the weight of the shrimp on board by species before any shrimp are removed from the vessel.
- (e) For the purposes of this section,
 - (1) “business day” means a day other than Saturday, Sunday, or a state holiday;
 - (2) “catcher-processor” means a commercial fisherman who catches and either sells or attempts to sell processed shrimp, and does not purchase or process shrimp caught on another vessel;
 - (3) “catcher-seller” means a commercial fisherman who catches and either sells or attempts to sell unprocessed shrimp to a person not licensed to process shrimp.

Application of New Reporting and Fish Ticket Regulations

Part (a) applies to all commercial shrimp fishermen. The department is not planning to make “other arrangements” to this requirement to notify the department within two days of deploying gear and within two business days after ceasing fishing in a district, or portion of a district, with a GHL. The department is implementing this new requirement this season in order to more effectively track effort and harvest in the fishery.

Part (b) applies to shrimp catcher-processors (including direct-marketers) and to shrimp catcher-sellers, but not to shrimp fishermen who make deliveries to shore-based or floating processors. This requirement to report to the department specified information by noon on Wednesday of each week has been in effect for catcher-processors during recent years. The once a week call-in reporting requirements allows fishermen 2 ½ days at the start of each week to contact the local area office. Fishermen are advised that it would be most efficient to contact the office responsible for each area: Districts 1–4, Ketchikan; Districts 5–8 and 10, Petersburg or Wrangell; Districts 11, 12, and 16, Juneau; Districts 9 and 13, Sitka; and District 15, Haines.

Part (c) applies only to shrimp catcher-processors. The same requirement has been in place during past seasons. The regulatory language has been clarified, but provisions for daily fish tickets for each district, submitting fish tickets within 7 days of a closure, and contacting the department before fishing in a new district, remains the same.

The department relies on detailed information provided by means of fish tickets in order to appropriately manage the fishery. The department will need information provided in this fashion in order to make timely decisions each week regarding the status of the fishery. **Under this provision, catcher-sellers will be required to report catches weekly in District 1, District 2, Section 3-A, Sections 3-B/C, District 4, District 9, District 11-Remainder, Sections 13-A/B, District 14, District 15, and District 16. Under the provision for “other arrangements” the department is excluding from weekly reporting catcher-sellers fishing in District 5, District 6, District 7, District 8, District 10, District 11-Seymour, District 12-Tenakee, and Section 13-C from this requirement.**

Tenakee Inlet, Seymour Canal, Section 13-C, and District 10 are excluded from this requirement for catcher-sellers due to the expected short duration of the seasons and on-the-grounds management in these areas. Districts 5, 6, 7, and 8 are excluded from this requirement for catcher-sellers due to the relatively fewer numbers of catcher-sellers generally fishing in these districts, and since there is sufficient time to accurately manage for GHLs set for these areas. Weekly reporting requirements will begin in those districts listed above where required from Monday, October 1, through Wednesday, October 3. To facilitate reporting requirements, the department will provide reporting forms at ADF&G area offices.

To keep harvest information confidential, the department suggests that each catcher-processor reporting via radio indicate a ***unique number*** for their operation **at the time of registration**. The unique number is unnecessary if harvest information is reported via cell or satellite phones. Harvest information reported during radio calls inseason will be based on a percentage of their unique number. For example, if the unique number were equal to 10,000 pounds, a reported catch of 30% would equal 3,000 pounds.

General Fish Ticket Reporting Requirements

Fishermen, catcher-processors, and catcher-sellers selling to a processor, must furnish factual information for the completion of fish tickets at the time of landing. It is important to include the statistical sub-district information (example 107-10, lower Ernest Sound) to identify where the harvest occurred. Multiple statistical sub-districts can be entered on a single fish ticket, and fishermen should account for the harvest from each sub-district. A fish ticket for each district or area that has a GHR is required [5AAC 31.143 (c)].

The shrimp fish ticket has a box in the heading to record the number of pot lifts specific to that ticket. In order to obtain accurate catch per unit effort information the department is requiring that information concerning the number of pot lifts is recorded on each fish ticket. The daily number of pots lifted should be written on the top of the fish ticket in the effort box on these new tickets. The effort column in the body of the ticket should be left blank. For example, if 100 pots are fished twice a day, the number of pot lifts should read 200 for that day and district. All fish tickets must be imprinted with a valid Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission (CFEC) card and completed at the time of delivery. The department also requests that fishermen fill in the number of days actually fished (days gear was in the water) each time they pick their gear.

Voluntary Catcher-Processor Logbook Program

In cooperation with the Southeast Alaska Pot Shrimp Task Force, the department has implemented a voluntary logbook program since the 2005/2006 season in order to obtain additional information on shrimp catch size distribution from catcher-processors. The information generated has been shown to be useful to the department when evaluating population trends and in setting an appropriate GHL to better manage the fishery. The department encourages all catcher-processors to participate in this voluntary program this season. The Pot Shrimp Task Force has supported and encouraged the implementation of this program. Those interested in participating will need to provide specific shrimp size category information at the time of registration and will need to record catch size distribution data on daily fish tickets as specified in an information packet available at ADF&G area offices.

Experimental Inseason Management Plan

As an outcome of meetings with the Southeast Alaska Pot Shrimp Task Force this past winter, the department is looking into developing an experimental inseason management plan for Districts 6 and 7. Logbook information may be an integral part of that plan. The department plans on meeting with pot shrimp fishermen who intend on fishing in Districts 6 and 7 on or about Friday, September 21 in Wrangell. The results of those discussions will determine if logbooks will be made mandatory for catcher-processors fishing in Districts 6 and 7. If logbooks are to be required, a subsequent news release announcing such will be released. Those interested in additional information or interested in attending this meeting should contact the Petersburg or Wrangell ADF&G offices.

Closed Waters

Fishermen should be aware that some waters of Southeast Alaska are closed to the commercial harvest of shrimp. Those areas are listed in 5AAC 31.136. CLOSED WATERS IN REGISTRATION AREA A in

the 2012–2015 Statewide Commercial Shrimp, Dungeness Crab, and Miscellaneous Shellfish Fishing Regulations pamphlet.

Octopus Bycatch

A management plan has been adopted [5AAC 38.150] and a commissioner's permit is no longer required to retain and sell octopus bycatch. The regulation allows for retention of octopus up to 35% of the whole weight of spot shrimp harvested and provides for a maximum harvest level of 35,000 pounds for Area A. The department will close the fishery to further retention of octopus by emergency order in the event that the maximum level is reached. All octopus sold or retained for personal use must be recorded on a fish ticket.

Pot Shrimp Fishing Offshore

Offshore waters are included in Districts 4, 13, and 16, the boundary lines of which are described in 5AAC 31.105 (d), (m), and (p). The offshore area includes the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of the United States. The EEZ extends to a distance of 200 nautical miles offshore of the defined fish districts (President Proclamation 5030). Fishermen who wish to fish in offshore waters may do so only if those districts are open. Shrimp harvested in these areas will be part of existing GHs for those districts. Fishermen who wish to fish in these areas must have a Southeast Alaska commercial pot shrimp fishery CFEC permit card.

General Information

The information contained in this news release is intended as a summary of important regulations. Participants in the Southeast Alaska shrimp pot fishery are reminded to obtain and review a copy of the 2012–2015 Statewide Commercial Shrimp, Dungeness Crab, and Miscellaneous Shellfish Fishing Regulations booklet to make sure that they are familiar with and understand all pertinent regulations.

Fishery Contacts

For more information regarding the commercial pot shrimp fishery please contact any of the following Area Management Biologists:

Ketchikan (225-5195): Scott Walker, Justin Breese or Bo Meredith,
Petersburg (772-3801): Troy Thynes or Kevin Clark,
Wrangell (874-3822): Tom Kowalske,
Sitka (747-6688): Dave Gordon or Eric Coonradt,
Juneau (465-4250): Dave Harris,
Haines (766-2830): Randy Bachman.

News releases web site: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=cfnews.main>.

<i>Office</i>	<i>Ketchikan</i>	<i>Petersburg</i>	<i>Wrangell</i>	<i>Sitka</i>	<i>Juneau</i>	<i>Haines</i>	<i>Yakutat</i>
ADF&G	225-5195	772-3801	874-3822	747-6688	465-4250	766-2830	784-3255
AWT	225-5111	772-3983	874-3215	747-3254	465-4000	766-2533	784-3220